



Buckingham Park

Church of England Primary School

Excellence, through God who strengthens us

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School Policy Document

Charging and Remissions

Policy

Date Adopted by Full Governing Body:	13/06/2023
Last reviewed on:	13/06/2023
Next review due by:	01/06/2024

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Buckingham Park Church of England Combined School is a Voluntary Aided School serving the whole community. We aim to provide the highest quality all round education, for each and every child, in partnership with parents, within the context of a Christian community. In short, 'Excellence, through God who strengthens us'.
- 1.2 All our students should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their parents' financial means. This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some students taking full advantage of the opportunities.
- 1.3 The 1996 Education Act requires all schools to have a policy on charging and remissions for school activities, which will be kept under regular review. The review date for this policy is recorded above.
- 1.4 This policy takes into account the DfE Departmental advice for governing bodies, school leaders, school staff and local authorities on Charging for school activities (May 2018)

2. Voluntary contributions

- 2.1 Separately from the matter of charging, schools may always seek voluntary contributions in order to offer a wide variety of experiences to students. All requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise their voluntary nature and the fact that students of parents who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently from those who have.
- 2.2 The law says:
 - If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions the parents will be notified of this from the outset.
 - No child will be excluded from an activity because parents are unable to pay.
 - If insufficient contributions are raised, the trip or activity may have to be cancelled.
 - If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay their child will be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

3. Activities for which charges will not be made

- 3.1 School governing bodies and local authorities, cannot charge for:
 - an admission application to any state funded school - paragraph 1.9 (n) of the 'School Admissions Code 2012' rules out requests for financial contributions as any part of the admissions process;
 - education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
 - education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum¹, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
 - instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent;
 - entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; and
 - examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school².

4. Activities for which charges may be made

4.1 Schools and local authorities can charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;
- optional extras (see section 5);
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see section 6);
- certain early years provision (provision over and above the fully-funded provision);
- community facilities.

5. Charges for additional activities

5.1 Charges may be made for some activities that are known as 'optional extras'. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge can be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment.

5.2 Optional extras are:

- education provided outside of school time that is not:
 - part of the national curriculum;
 - part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
 - part of religious education.
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education);
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit;
- extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).
- In calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to:
 - any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra;
 - the cost of buildings and accommodation;
 - non-teaching staff;
 - teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
 - the cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra.

6. Music Tuition

- 6.1 Although the law states that, in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to that rule. The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 set out the circumstances in which charges can be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, including vocal tuition.
- 6.2 We will make a charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups (of any size), where the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent. Charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.
- 6.3 A charge will not be made if the teaching is either an essential part of the national curriculum, or is provided under the first access to the key stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme.
- 6.4 No charge will be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989).

7. Residential Visits

- 7.1 No charge will be made for the following:
- education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours;
 - education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
 - supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.
- 7.2 A charge will be made for board and lodging (the charge will not exceed the actual cost).
- 7.3 Parents whose children are currently eligible for free school meals will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging.

8. Remissions

- 8.1 In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged students, the governing board has agreed that some activities and visits, where charges can legally be made, will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents of children who are eligible for free school meals.
- 8.2 The governing board will look sympathetically at applications for reduced charges from parents of children who do not currently qualify for free school meals, but request a consideration in terms of reduced or waived charges for activities and visits for which there is a charge. The headteacher will consider these requests on behalf of the governing board.

9. Additional considerations

9.1 The governing body recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Where possible we shall publish notification of visits (and their approximate cost) as early as possible
- We will establish a system for parents to pay in instalments for residential visits
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip
- We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a 'first pay, first served' basis discriminates against students from families on lower incomes and we will not use that method of selection (though we will have deadlines for payments to support the administration of such visits and events)